



SOUVENIR

OF THE OPENING OF THE

Victoria Theatre

BY

GRACE HAWTHORNE.

MONDAY OCT. 19TH 1885.

On the inside Pages will be found
Interesting Reading Matter concerning
MISS. HAWTHORNE and the Inception
and Construction of the Victoria Theatre.

HISTORICAL FACTS.

It will be found interesting at this time to indulge in an historical retrospect of the rise and fall of the various places of dramatic entertainment in this fair city during the past twenty-seven years. The elegant structure which has risen on an eligible site in the heart of Victoria marks a new and important epoch in the history of the drama. Massive walls and beautiful and costly appointments point to the abiding confidence which those who have been instrumental in their erection entertain in the future prosperity of Victoria, the Premier City of the British Pacific. The contrast between this and every preceding effort (however laudable) to furnish to Victorians a handsome and costly place of amusement—one to which they might point in a spirit of pardonable pride, is so marked that comparisons would indeed be odious; and we refrain from making them.

The first Theatre that Victoria rejoiced in was located on the upper flat of a large wooden building, called "The Star and Garter Hotel," which stood on the ground now occupied by the Masonic Hall on Government Street. It seated about 200 persons. In 1859 an old block house structure, still standing on Reid's wharf, built by the Hudson Bay Company as a storehouse for salmon, was converted into a ball room, and two or three dramatic entertainments were afterwards given there by officers of H. M. Fleet then stationed at Esquimalt. During the same year "The Colonial Theatre," afterwards "The Lyceum," was erected on Government Street, where Victoria House now stands. A hall in the Royal Hotel, Wharf Street, now Earle & Stemmler's Spice Factory, was the next candidate for popular favor. Then came "Moore's Hall," (now "The Omineca,") on Yates Street; and "The New Idea," in the basement of Lawrence Goodacre's building at the corner of Government and Johnson Streets. About this time the palisades, within which had been erected the Hudson Bay Company's warehouses, the Governor's residence and other early buildings, were removed and the property divided into lots and sold. SIR W. B. BEAULIE was a purchaser at this sale, having conceived the idea of converting one of the large storehouses into a Theatre. That idea was afterwards carried into effect, and the converted building for many years was known as "Theatre Royal." It seated about 500 persons, and was long the pride and admiration of the early townspeople. As years rolled along old age overtook it and it fell into a state of decrepitude that was painful to behold. In October, 1882, the old building which in its day had echoed the deep tragic tones of Charles Kean, the gentle voice of Julia Dean Hayne, and the "smirks and grimaces" of John Wood, was demolished to make room for *The Colonist* building. Since the demolition of Theatre Royal the devotees of Thespis have worshipped at her shrine in Philharmonic Hall. Creditable as that place would have been a few years ago it was long felt that it did not keep pace with the requirements of the age or worthily represent the important position which the city of Victoria is about to take in the commerce of the world as the western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway. But it was many months before the project for a new Theatre took shape. Like all great schemes it needed to be agitated and discussed from every standpoint, the least of which, it should in justice to the gentlemen who subsequently subscribed to the shares of the company, was the consideration of profit. A preliminary meeting was held at *The Driard House* on the 9th August, 1884, Mr. D. W. HIGGINS in the chair, and Mr. J. J. AUSTIN acting as Secretary. It was then resolved to organize a Theatre Company, with a capital of \$50,000, in shares of \$500 each. On the 22nd September the first Shareholders' meeting was held and the following permanent directors and officers chosen:

Directors—R. DUNSMUIR, Esq., M. P. P., Chairman; THE HON. HUGH NELSON, K. P. RITHET, Esq., J. P., L. REDON, Esq., J. KURTZ, Esq., C. STROUSS, Esq.

Solicitors—MESSRS. DAVIE & WILSON.

Secretary and Treasurer—JOHN J. AUSTIN.

On the 10th of November the plans submitted by C. E. Apponyi, Esq. were approved of. The corner stone of the edifice was laid by the President, R. Dunsmuir, Esq., M. P. P., assisted by His Worship, Mayor Rithet, and the Board of Directors, on the 31st March, 1885. After that date the work steadily progressed until the evening of opening on the 19th inst., when it was formally dedicated to the drama. Victoria has reason to be proud of this, one of the most beautiful structures on the Pacific Coast, to which every person who has been interested in its construction, even in the humblest capacity, may point with a feeling of satisfaction.

In conclusion, dear friends, we bespeak for the Company, of which we have the honor to be members, your generous patronage and countenance.

Respectfully,

THE GRACE HAWTHORNE COMPANY.

PRESS COMMENTS.

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Grace Hawthorne had a large house last night at the Grand. Her characterization of Camille must be accepted as the very best of the day. It was a pretty study. Her grace of walk, her finish of elocution, and her pose throughout showed an artist whom it will not be well to make light of.—*Chicago Herald.*

If a large audience, which was not only appreciative, but was really enthusiastic, is any evidence of success, the presentation of the new play Queen by Grace Hawthorne and her supporting company at Pope's last night was an undoubted success. The efforts of the star and the company, were received in the warmest manner, and after the mad scene in the third act Miss Hawthorne was recalled five times before the curtain, and was given an ovation and a splendid floral tribute.—*St. Louis Post Dispatch.*

With Lucille Western dead, and Mrs. D. P. Bowers retired, there is now no woman living on the American stage that can play the dual role of Lady Isabel and Madame Vine in East Lynne as well as Grace Hawthorne can and does.—*New Orleans Picayune.*

Grace Hawthorne, during her performance as "Miss Multon," yesterday afternoon, received eleven calls before the curtain. This must have been very gratifying to her, coming as it did from an audience composed principally of ladies.—*Cincinnati Times-Star.*

Grace Hawthorne has scored a bright success. The applause she brings is spontaneous and genuine incense to brilliant ability and during her week here she was several times complimented by recalls at the close of the play, which is a rare distinction for an actress to achieve in this city.—*St. Louis Republican.*

During the week MISS HAWTHORNE will present the following repertoire of Plays:

Monday Night, October 19th, 1885,

"THE NEW CAMILLE."

In which great character MISS HAWTHORNE is unequalled.

Tuesday Night, October 20th,

"QUEENA."

The great Union Square Theatre Comedy success.

Wednesday Matinee, 2:30 P. M.

"EAST LYNNE."

The ever popular and great emotional Drama.

Wednesday Night, October 21st,

"FROU-FROU."

Thursday Night, October 22nd,

"MISS MULTON."

Friday Night, October 23rd,

"ADRIENNE LE COUVREUR."

Saturday Matinee, 2:30 P. M.

"THE NEW CAMILLE."

Saturday Night, October 24th,

Grand Farewell Performance, for which a Special Bill will be prepared.